

CLAIMS

What we claim is:

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1. A method of verifying an identification of a customer using a self-checkout system of a retail establishment, comprising the steps of:

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obtaining an image of a customer's identification at the self-checkout system;

displaying the customer's identification at a location remote from said self-checkout system to verify the identification of said customer.

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2. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer's identification comprises a personal identification card, the step of obtaining comprises capturing an image of the personal identification card, and the step of displaying comprises displaying the image of the personal identification card at a location remote from said self-checkout system to verify the customer's identification.

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3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of displaying comprises displaying the customer's personal identification card at an attendant station to verify the customer's identification.

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4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of verifying the identification of the customer comprises verifying an age of the customer.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of verifying the identification of the customer comprises verifying a name of said customer.

5 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of verifying the identification of the customer comprises verifying a facial appearance of said customer.

10 7. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer's identification comprises a facial appearance of said customer, the step of obtaining comprises capturing an image of the facial appearance of said customer, and the step of displaying comprises displaying an image of the facial appearance of said customer at a location remote from said self-checkout system to verify at least one of an age of said customer and an identity of said customer.

20 8. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer's identification comprises a personal identification card and a facial appearance of said customer, the step of obtaining comprises capturing an image of the personal identification card and an image of the facial appearance of said customer, and the step of displaying comprises displaying the image of the personal identification card and an image of the facial
25 appearance of said customer at a location remote from said self-checkout system to verify the identification of said customer.

30 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of obtaining comprises capturing an image of the personal identification card with a video camera at the self-checkout system.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of obtaining
comprises capturing an image of the personal identification card
with a product identification code reader at the self-checkout
system.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing said
image.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer's
identification comprises a stored image of the customer and
stored personal information of said customer, the step of
obtaining comprises obtaining the stored image of the customer
and the personal information of said customer by swiping a
magnetic strip of an identification card through a magnetic card
reader, and the step of displaying comprises displaying the
stored image of the customer and the stored personal information
at a location remote from said self-checkout system to verify
the customer's identification.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer's
identification comprises a stored image of the customer and
stored personal information of said customer, the step of
obtaining comprises obtaining the stored image of the customer
and the personal information of said customer by scanning a
barcode on an identification card using a barcode scanner, and
the step of displaying comprises displaying the stored image of
the customer and the stored personal information at a location
remote from said self-checkout system to verify the customer's
identification.

14. A video identification verification system for a self-checkout system of a retail establishment, comprising:

a video source for use at the self-checkout system and
5 adapted to obtain an image of a customer's identification; and
a video destination coupled to said video source and
located at a location remote from said self-checkout system,
said video destination adapted to display an image of said
customer's identification to verify the identification of said
10 customer.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein said video source is
adapted to capture an image of a customer's personal
identification card, and said video destination is adapted to
display an image of said customer's identification card to
verify at least one of an age of the customer, a name of said
customer, and a facial appearance of said customer.

16. The system of claim 14, wherein said video source
20 comprises a CCD camera.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein said video source is a
product identification code reader.

25 18. The system of claim 14, wherein said video source is a
magnetic strip reader.

19. The system of claim 14, wherein said video source is
adapted to capture an image of a customer's facial appearance,
30 and said video destination is adapted to display an image of

said customer's facial appearance to verify at least one of an age of the customer and an identity of said customer.

20. A method of verifying the identification of multiple customers of multiple respective self-checkout systems of a retail establishment, comprising the steps of:

capturing images of the customers' respective identifications as respective video streams;

combining the multiple video streams into a single stream with a multiplexer;

separating the single stream into multiple video streams with a demultiplexer;

displaying multiple images of the customers' respective identifications resulting from said video streams at multiple destinations to verify the identifications of said customers.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of capturing images comprises capturing images with video cameras and displaying images comprises displaying images with monitors.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of capturing comprises capturing images of customers' identification cards to verify at least one of an age of the customer, a name of said customer, and a facial appearance of said customer.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of capturing comprises capturing images of customers' facial appearances to verify at least one of an age of the customer and an identity of said customer.

24. The method of claim 20, further comprising digitizing the video streams from said video sources.

5 25. The method of claim 24, further comprising processing the digitized video streams.

26. A video identification verification system for multiple respective self-checkout systems of a retail establishment, comprising:

10 multiple video sources for use at the respective self-checkout systems, each video source being adapted to capture an image of a customer's identification at the self-checkout system and convert the image into a video stream;

15 a multiplexer coupled to the video sources and adapted to combine the video streams from the video sources into one stream;

a demultiplexer coupled to the multiplexer and adapted to separate said one stream into video streams;

20 multiple destinations located remotely from said self-checkout system, said multiple destinations coupled to said demultiplexer for receiving said video streams, each destination adapted to display an image of said customer's identification to verify the identification of said customer.

25 27. The system of claim 26, wherein said video source comprises a video camera adapted to capture an image of a customer's personal identification card, and said destination is a monitor adapted to display an image of said customer's identification card to verify at least one of an age of the customer, a name of said customer, and a facial appearance of

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said customer.

28. The system of claim 26, wherein said video source is adapted to capture an image of a customer's facial appearance, and said destination comprises a monitor adapted to display an image of said customer's facial appearance to verify at least one of an age of the customer and an identity of said customer.

29. The system of claim 26, further comprising a digitizer coupled to said multiplexer and adapted to convert an analog video stream from said video source to a digital video stream.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein said digitizer is integrated with said multiplexer.

31. The system of claim 29, further comprising a computer adapted to process said digital video stream from said digitizer.

32. The system of claim 26, wherein said destination comprises a computer.

33. The system of claim 26, wherein said destination comprises a monitor.

34. The system of claim 26, wherein said system is part of a network, said network being a member of the group consisting of a Local Area Network, a Metropolitan Area Network, a Wide Area Network, and the internet.